

disclose the other claimed methods. Therefore, divergent fields need not be searched in the course of examination.

Applicants submit that because the subject matter of the Examiner's groupings have been shown to be interrelated the requirement should be withdrawn. In addition, Applicants submit that because the subject matter as claimed in the Groups relates to the same defined polypeptide (or nucleic acid) sequences described in Group I, the Examiner's search will involve the same art and fields of search even if a single group of claims is separately prosecuted. Thus, the Examiner's time and search parameters would not be so burdensome as to support the requirement.

In view of these facts and because restriction is a discretionary procedural matter with the PTO, Applicants respectfully submit that the restriction requirement may properly be withdrawn. Favorable consideration of this request in light of the above remarks is requested.

However, to expedite production and as required by 37 CFR 1.143, Applicant agrees to prosecute Group I (claims 64-65) without prejudice to further prosecute the claims of Group II (claim 66) and Group III (claims 31-95).

In the Office Action dated February 25, 2004, claims 64 and 65 were under consideration. The Examiner allowed claim 64 and objected to claim 65. Claim 65 has been amended to overcome the objection. Applicant submits that at a minimum, claims 64 and 65 are in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all rejections and objections and allowance of all claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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